

Mass Youth Soccer



Statewide U6-U12 Curriculum

The purpose of this curriculum is to help standardize “best practice” soccer training throughout Massachusetts. Through licensure courses, clinics, and ongoing support of towns and clubs, Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association works to educate as many coaches as possible. However, the coaching population is constantly changing and with an estimated 30,000+ coaches in the state, we believe that we need to do more to connect with coaches on a consistent basis. This curriculum will serve as a bridge for those connections in that town/club leaders can disseminate this curriculum to all coaches in order to develop coaching consistency within age groups and a developmental progression across age groups. The curriculum can stand on its own to teach all coaches what is best for developing players. At the same time, both town/club leaders and all member coaches can utilize our coaching staff for constant consultation and/or clarification whenever needed. Please understand that every child varies in their development and these are strictly guidelines. Guidelines are meant to be flexible as all players of the same age are certainly not at the same developmental level. It is important we challenge all players at a level that befits their ability. The information in this document comes not only from the State Director of Coaching and the State Developmental Coaches but also from the National Director of Coaching and other National Staff Coaches. The information is not solely based on observation and experience in soccer, but also on research and practice in psychology, child development, physiology, child education, and learning theory. We hope all towns/clubs will use this curriculum to guide their coaches and to help insure our players are being provided the best soccer environment possible.

www.mayouthsoccer.org

Mass Youth Soccer Statewide U10 Curriculum

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Skill Priorities</u>
U-10	Continue with dribbling foci from U8 Passing with inside and outside of both feet Shooting with both feet---using laces Receiving the ball with all parts of body Heading
	<u>Tactical Priorities</u> Basic Attacking Ideas Basic Defending Ideas Comprehend 1 vs 1 concepts Comprehend 2 vs 1 concepts Introduction to 2 vs 2 concepts Comprehend roles of 1st and 2nd defenders Comprehend roles of 1st and 2nd attackers

As we move up the age ladder from the U8 level to the U10 level there are many differences we must attend to in order to provide an optimal experience for young players of this age. However, there are also many similarities. Just as in parenting, it is important to be consistent in coaching and we must make sure that we follow a progressive trend of development for young players. To this ends, we need to continue to focus on technique during our practices, as we did at the younger ages. Creating environments in which players get maximum repetitions of technical skills is key. Players at this age should still work on ball mastery and demonstrate growing familiarity and comfortability with a ball at their feet.

Typical Characteristics of U10 Players

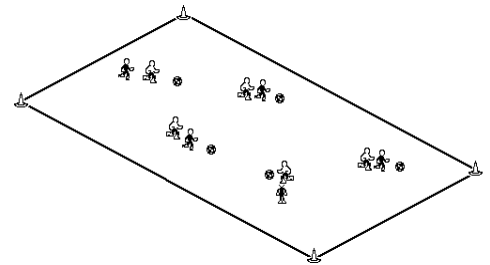
- *attention span lengthens from U8---they start to show the ability to sequence thought and actions*
- *they start to think ahead and think “If this, then that”*
- *they are more inclined towards wanting to play soccer rather than being told to play*
- *demonstrate increased self-responsibility – bringing a ball, water and all gear should now be their complete responsibility*
- *they start to recognize fundamental tactical concepts*
- *children at this age begin to become aware of peer pressure*
- *players greatly affiliate with their team or their coach—“I play for the Tigers” or “I play for coach Amy’s team”*

- *players at this age are extremely rule bound*—remember each rule you create is the equivalent of a bar in the prison in which you would like to live
- *there is a wide continuum of maturity evident on most teams this is still a crucial age for technical skill development*

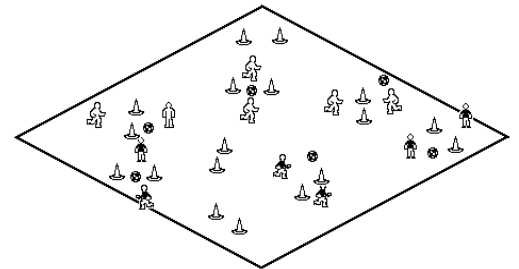
Some Recommended Games for U10 Players:

- 1) Free Dribble---Everyone with a ball, use inside, outside, and sole of the foot. Have players dribble with speed (outside of foot), change direction, and perform moves. Coach calls out moves or changes in direction and sets the pace as the manipulator of the session, kids carry the ball towards someone and try a move. *Version 2:* As players get comfortable, coach can walk around and put pressure on players as they are performing dribbling tasks. This adds fun and interaction. *Version 3:* Make the game a knockout game in which players try to knock each other's balls out of the grid while maintaining possession of their own. Note: You may wish to have them perform a skills task before re-entering such as 10 toe touches or juggling 5 times. You do not want players sitting out.

- 2) Shield-Steal---Half of players in the group have a ball and half do not. If you do not have a ball you need to steal one from someone who does. If ball goes out of bounds, person who touched it last does not get possession. You can teach players the technical points of shielding as a group at start of activity. Show technique with body sideways, arm providing protection, ball on outside foot, knees bent, turning as defender attacks, using feel to understand where defender is going. Fix technical shielding errors throughout this activity and make sure entire group knows how to properly shield.

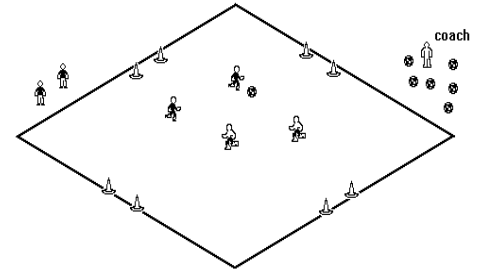


- 3) Gates Passing---Same set up as previous game. However players are now paired up and must successfully pass the ball through the cones to their teammate to earn a point. Again, players try to accumulate as many points as possible in the time allotted. Similar to previous game, have them pass only with their left foot or right foot, or the outside of their foot.

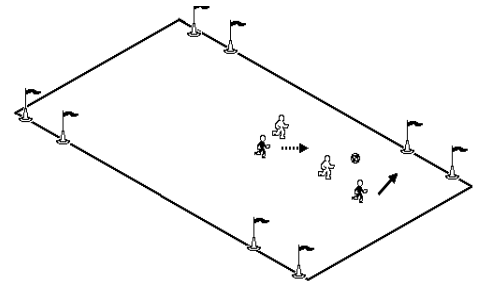


- 4) 1 vs. 1 To lines---In a grid 10x10 yards, players line up on opposite sides. The first player in each line alternates attacking the player opposite them. When the attacker dribbles over the line they score a goal. If the defender wins the ball he or she can counter attack to the opposite line to also score a goal. The players switch to the opposite line if a goal is scored or the ball goes out of bounds. The coach rotates the lines so all players get to compete against each other. *Version 2:* Make the grid larger and make this a 2 vs. 2 or a 3 vs. 3 game.
- 5) 1 vs. 1 To Two Small Goals---Same grids as above except now there is a three foot goal in the middle of each line. Attackers try to score by passing the ball through the goal. Defenders can counter attack to the opposite goal if they win the ball. Players switch sides after a goal or the ball goes out of bounds. The coach rotates the lines so all players get to compete against each other.

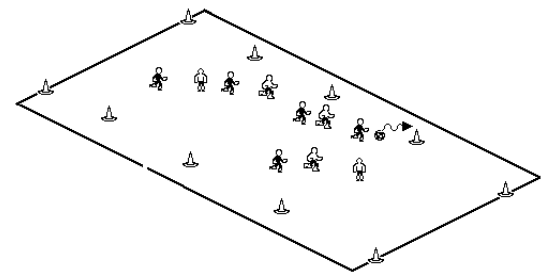
- 6) 2 vs. 2 to Four Cross Goals---Teams defend one goal and have the opportunity to score on the other three, you must dribble through a goal to score a point. The goals are on the ends of a large cross in a square grid roughly 10yd X 10yd. Have one team of 2 on deck, they come on when a team gets scored on twice. Game is continuous, they must run on immediately.



- 7) 2 vs. 2 To Four Small Goals---In a 15 X 15 yard grid with a small goal in each corner teams of two attack the two opposite goals and defend their two goals. The coach will set up as many grids as needed to accommodate the players. When the ball goes out of bounds it can be passed or dribbled in to play. The teams should be rotated every three minutes until all groups have played against each other. *Version 2:* 3 vs. 3 in a 20 X 25 yard grid. Teams should show a triangle shape in attack.



- 8) 4 vs. 4 Endzone Game---Teams comprised of 4-6 players depending on numbers and space. To score you must pass the ball to a teammate into the opponent's end zone (created with discs). The player cannot go into the endzone until after the ball has been passed. Stress recognizing opportunities and timing of passes.



- 9) Triangle Goal Game---Make a triangle with three cones in the center of the field. The sides of the triangle each serve as a goal mouth so teams can shoot at three different goals. Place 2 goalies in the triangle and the 2 goalies must protect the three goal mouths. Two even teams play a normal soccer game, except they both can score on any of the three faces of the triangle for a point. The game is continuous and if a goalie catches the ball he just throws it out so the game continues. *Version 2:* Use two balls at the same time.

- 10) 4 vs. 4 To Four Small Goals---In a 30 X 35 yard grid, the same rules as 3 vs. 3 but now players must show a diamond shape in attack.

***** Every practice should include a scrimmage*****

US YOUTH SOCCER & MASS YOUTH SOCCER GAME RECOMMENDATIONS

Under 10's play 6 vs 6 (including a goalkeeper)
 Field Size: 45 to 60 yds long X 35 to 45 yds wide
 Ball: #4